

SB 1533 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Prepared By: Beth Patrino, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/9, 2/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows equine therapy facility to be located in an exclusive farm use zone subject to local government findings under ORS 215.296. Establishes requirements for such equine therapy facility, including that the facility conduct cognitive, emotional, physical, or psychological therapy or counseling that directly or indirectly incorporates, in whole or in part, activities that use non-clinical settings having farm, agricultural, or livestock components. Prohibits a facility and activities that cause the removal of land from active agricultural production. Lists types of therapy or counseling activities that may be conducted at such a facility.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 Replaces measure. Allows equine and equine-affiliated therapeutic and counseling activities in an exclusive farm use zone subject to local government findings under ORS 215.296 and provided: (1) the activities are conducted in existing buildings that were lawfully constructed on the property before the effective date of Act or in new buildings that are accessory, incidental, and subordinate to farm use on the tract; and (2) all individuals conducting activities are acting within the proper scope of any required state license.

BACKGROUND:

The exclusive farm use (EFU) zone designation was developed by the legislature in 1961 along with the farm tax assessment program. Farm use is encouraged and protected within the zone while also allowing a variety of farm and non-farm related uses that have increased in type and number over the years. Minimum lot standards and dwelling approval standards limit the conversion of farmland to other uses. About 15.5 million acres of private land (56 percent) in Oregon are currently zoned for exclusive farm use.

Equine therapy includes a range of treatments that use a horse as a therapeutic tool.

Senate Bill 1533 would allow equine therapy facilities that meet certain requirements in exclusive farm use zones.